

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is meant to be a complete response to the Final Office Action mailed August 18, 2005. Applicant respectfully submits that this response fully complies with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.116, and therefore entry thereof is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Applicants' claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Weder (US 6,402,675). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as Weder is clearly not a valid reference under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

The subject application has an effective filing date of June 19, 1997 (all of the dependencies listed in the history of the subject application are straight continuations, and therefore the subject application is clearly entitled to the June 19, 1997 filing date).

The Weder '675 patent was filed on February 1, 2001 and issued on June 11, 2002; therefore, such patent was not published or issued more than one year prior to the June 19, 1997 effective filing date of the subject application, and thus is clearly not available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

As such, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejection of claims 1-16 over Weder ('675).

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-16, as now pending, are in condition for allowance. Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, or the remarks contained herein, Applicants' agent would welcome the opportunity to discuss such matters with the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,



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